

Theories of Consciousness, Therapy, and Loneliness

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ABSTRACT: The article offers a brief set of definitions of metaphysical and epistemological principles underlying three distinct theories of consciousness and then relates these paradigms to a triad of contemporary therapeutic modalities. Accordingly, it connects materialism, empiricism, determinism and a passive interpretation of the “mind”=brain to medication interventions and behavioral and cognitive treatments. In this context, the paper proceeds to argue that these treatment approaches are theoretically incapable of addressing the dominant issue of man’s loneliness, and his struggle to escape from it, as the most basic universal drive in human beings. Next, it discusses the dualist, idealist, and rationalist assumptions of an active reflexive, self-consciousness, which has dominated insight-oriented treatment methodologies since Freud. And, finally, it treats the Hesperian and Sartre an phenomenological and existential descriptions of awareness as grounded in the transcendent principle of intentionality emphasizing the aspects of the freedom of consciousness. Lastly, it claims that the first view stresses the temporal present; the second the past; and the third the future.

In what follows, I wish to define a triad of philosophical theories of consciousness in Western thought and relate them to their implied modes of therapeutic treatment approaches while at the same time stressing that the second and third models are alone capable of providing insights into the underlying dominant psychological principle motivating all human thought, passion, and action, namely, the basic motivational need of avoiding loneliness. Accordingly, I have maintained elsewhere that the fear of loneliness (or abandonment) and the struggle to escape it is either the sole, or at least the most fundamental and universal psychological drive in human beings (Mijuskovic, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1977a, 1977b, 1977c, 1978, 1978a, 1979, 1979a, 1979b, 1979-1980, 1980, 1980a, 1981, 1983, 1985, 1986, 1986a, 1987, 1988, 1988a, 1990, 1992, 1996). In pursuit of this underlying motivational principle, I not only initially followed the works of psychoanalysts Gregory Tilburg (1938) and Frieda From-Reichmann (1959) but in many respects I have continued to remain faithful to their model and method. Although I will begin with a discussion of (a) the materialist, empiricist, and behaviorist models of perception, I will go on to argue that (b) the second and (c) third descriptions of consciousness, which depend on (b) the reflexive nature of self-consciousness coupled with (c) the intentional, meaning-intending essences discovered within our thoughts and the phenomenological method are both required to adequately and, in fact, fully account for our hermitic feelings of loneliness, while at the same time providing us an understanding of our frantic and futile efforts to escape our mental cages.

The basic purpose of this study, then, will be to assert, as Harry Stack Sullivan and Frieda Fromm-Reichman have insisted, that all mental disorders are attributable to interpersonal dysfunctions and not to chemical imbalances in the brain. In turn, interpersonal issues are themselves grounded in an even more fundamental struggle of the individual to overcome his or her loneliness. Social and cultural relations are merely the means to solve the problem of

isolation. If one fails, therefore, to grasp the motivational principle of each person's struggle to escape their sense of enforced isolation, then one will have failed to comprehend both the psychological "material" element of *feelings*, the formal pattern of the social fabric as imbedded in *meanings* and hence the true source of mental distress. Consequently, in the writings previously cited, I have posited a psychologically universal and necessary (*a priori*), transcendental ground leading to the human fear of loneliness, as well as the related anxiety of abandonment, as the critical existential concerns of mankind. And although both my starting point and discussion are indebted to Kant, in the broadest sense, my contentions, I believe can be also empirically confirmed. Just as Graham Greene excavates the multifaceted layers of betrayal--betrayal of values, of others, and of the self—in the bulk of his novels, just so, in a similar Kantian fashion, I try to transcendently probe below the superficial upper layers of social appearances and convention in search of the underlying supportive foundations for human passion, thought, and action.

In effect, then, I am attempting to follow Kant by asking a transcendental question--assuming that indeed the need to avoid loneliness is the dominant, universal and necessary (*a priori*) feature of human experience--then the question can be asked: what are the conditions that make loneliness not only possible but in fact inevitable?

I will also go on to claim that (a) the materialist-empiricist bias tends to restrict itself unduly to the temporal present in therapy; whereas the dualist-rationalist view is "deeper" in its emphasis on the past; while the phenomenological-existential commitment points to a wide and completely open future in terms of the individual's investment of meaning and values. Finally, and rather parenthetically, I will append some brief comments for further possible exploration beyond the scope of the present article suggesting that the three theories of consciousness also

have an application in regard to the various styles of narrative expression in the modern and contemporary novel. And I believe that is a connection worth exploring simply because all great literature offers philosophical and psychological insights into human nature.

Accordingly, I contend that in Western philosophy, there are three dominant paradigms of consciousness. And these three models have exhibited a direct impact on therapeutic approaches to psychiatric disorders. The first two opposing, indeed antagonistic, principles to be discussed--materialism/empiricism versus dualism/rationalism--have traditionally pitted Democritus against Plato; Epicurus against Plotinus; Hobbes against Descartes; Locke against Leibniz; Hume against Kant; Mill against Hegel; D. M. Armstrong against H. D. Lewis; and so on and on. It is the battle between the Giants (the materialists, protagorean empiricists, and Democritean behaviorists) and the Gods (the the platonic dualists, rationalists, and "idealists") treated in Plato's dialogue, the *Sophist*.

Metaphysical Assumptions:

Metaphysical materialism is the thesis that all that exists is (a) physical matter plus (b) motion. As a parenthetical comment, it is generally concluded that since both the atoms (extended and solid) and motion are eternal, it (usually) follows that a theistic, "creative" God is unnecessary and the human "soul" is mortal.

By contrast, although metaphysical dualism, and its nascent difficulties originate in Plato (*Republic, Times*), the generated issues become critical in Descartes, as he follows Plato in opposing two separate, irreconcilable substances. Thus, Cartesians conceptually defines and distinguishes--and accordingly ontologically separates--(1) an immaterial, directly accessible, essentially mental, unextended sphere of the mind in opposition to body as a material, independently existing, external, extended world, thus maintaining that what can be conceived

distinctly can exist independently, since the mind and its activities of consciousness are essentially both immaterial, simple, unextended. Furthermore, the mind is described as (b) active, self-conscious, reflexive; and (c) indivisible; hence it constitutes a “unity of consciousness” and usually, although certainly not always, it is also argued to be immortal as a consequence.

In direct opposition, the body, by contrast, is regarded as (a') extended, physical, spatial, material, corporeal; (b') passive, inert; and (c') divisible, compounded i.e., composed of parts external to each other; hence naturally mortal. Consequently, since the two substances share no common properties or attributes, several problems directly follow: (1) how can I know that an external, independent world exists apart from my mind; (2) how can the two substances interact; (3) how can a mental concept correspond to, resemble, or represent a physical object; and (4) if I can *only* immediately, directly know my own mind, how can I then immediately, indirectly infer the existence of other minds?

Metaphysical idealism, in contrast to materialism, is the assertion that all that exists is mental, mind-dependent, or spiritual (G. E. Moore) and therefore all reality and appearance is restricted to mental beings and/or God. Accordingly, idealism addresses the problematic issues of dualism and the mind-body problem by reductively identifying existence and consciousness and holding that to be is to be perceived by some mind and thus “translating” all consciousness solely into mental existences/beings. (For positive arguments in support of metaphysical and epistemological idealism, see my *Achilles of Rationalist Arguments* [1974] and *Contingent Immaterialism* [1984].)

Epistemological Assumptions.

In previous publications, I have maintained that there are three primary epistemological

models of awareness, excluding the singular and exceptional doctrine of neutral monism of William James and Bertrand Russell, that have determined the direction of speculative thought and its practical application in philosophy, psychology, and literature. In what follows, I shall try to delineate their essential features.

It is easiest and simplest to start with empiricism, which is traditionally a natural ally to materialism. It is the conviction that all of our ideas are derived from and dependent upon precedent sensations or Human impressions; or, conversely, that there is no idea in the mind that is not at first given in experience (Aristotle's and Locke's *tabular Rasa*). Since the opposite of an empirical "matter of fact" (Hume) is always imaginable, possible, conceivable, it follows that there is no contradiction in asserting either the existence or the non-existence of any empirical matter of fact. Thus the best we can ever hope to achieve, in terms of epistemological considerations, are varying degrees of belief--not knowledge--grounded in empirical probabilities and culminating in feelings of psychological anticipation.

By contrast, rationalism fits quite comfortably with both dualism and idealism. It is the principle that some of our concepts or truths are known independently of sensation or experience. These "pure," non-sensuous concepts are innate, already (predisposition ally) present within the mind; and they are *a priori* in two important respects: (a) they are universally true, true in all possible universes, and for all time; and (b) they are necessary in the respect that any opposite assertion implies either a real or a logical contradiction. Since what is true within the mind, rationalists assume, is also true in extra-mental reality, "outside" the mind--the order of ideas mirrors the order of things (Spinoza)--it follows that absolute knowledge is attainable.

Implications for Therapy:

Accordingly, at least five distinct but related claims follow for materialism and

empiricism (versus dualism, idealism, and rationalism): (1) The brain is physical, material, spatially extended, and the "mind" is reducible to, identical with, or explainable by the brain (and/or the central nervous system); and since existence and materiality are identical, it follows, in effect, that the concept of the "mind" is completely eliminable as a helpful theoretical construct.

(2) The brain is passive; it is programmed or conditioned from "without," by external, stimuli, causes, or agents; it is like a computer and essentially mechanically explained by appealing to a behavioral stimulus-response model; accordingly, a mechanical paradigm of perception follows (Hobbes); the "mind" is more properly to be compared to a white sheet of paper or a blank tablet upon which experience writes (Aristotle, Locke).

(3) Perception is a key term; thus, for example, the eye is stimulated by an external object and as a result an impulse is transmitted to the brain, which in turn causes, produces, or results in a sensation. The sensation is then connected to a desire, an affective impulse, and the desire is associated with an image of the desired object or action, which in turn then causes or is discharged in a series of physical behaviors (Hobbes). The entire chain of events is essentially unidirectional or unilinear, as opposed to circular in the rationalistic concept of self-consciousness. Sensations in themselves are qualitatively "simple," e.g., a white patch is distinct from a yellow one. Ideas are merely "decaying" sensations, less forceful and vivacious than their antecedent counterparts; and when they combine in groups, by the principle and mechanism of the "association of ideas," they are (miraculously) translated into recognizable, i.e., "meaningful" perceptions/experiences (Hobbes, Hume).

(4) Sensations are immediate, direct and atomistic; they can exist independently of other sensations. Accordingly, this conception naturally entails an "atomistic psychology" (Hume). Incidentally, in the traditions, sensations are conceived to be a "flat," two-dimensional, and depth is learned through experience (Berkeley). And, finally (5), the "self" is not real; it's merely a

fortuitous bundle, an aggregate of disparate, discrete sensations that are transiently huddled together and appear and disappear in a continual flux. As Hume declares, perceptions follow each other with inconceivable rapidity and exhibit a Hyracoidian rate of flux.

In American literature, as opposed to psychology or philosophy, this theory of consciousness is represented by such novelists as Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

The rationalist camp, in opposition, holds that there is something special about the mind and although it has a problematic relationship to the body (the problem of dualism and the mind-body problem), nevertheless the mind must be conceptualized along radically different guidelines and powers than those of the body. (1) It exists but it is *simple*, i.e., immaterial, without physical parts, unextended, incorporeal. Thus idealism, as previously intimated, seeks to solve the mind-body problem by reducing or translating all reality into mental, mind dependent, or spiritual entities. By contrast, dualism, in principle, posits an irreconcilable schism between two irreducible and mutually opposed substances. Both idealism and dualism, as suggested above, are generally connected to rationalism, the principle that there are some truths that are known independently of sensation, experience (although at least Berkeley is a notable exception in this connection). Most importantly, "pure" meanings and relations cannot be reduced or resolved into a set of constructed sensations, as the empiricist school maintains. (2) The mind is active, spontaneous, free, and independent of external and material forces or causes. (3) It is self-conscious, reflexive; it can think upon its own thoughts, it can curl back on itself. This is, in principle, radically different than the account given of perception by the empiricist camp, which is explanatorily unidirectional or causal. Thus, it is contended by the rationalists that just as a camera cannot take its own picture, just as a flashlight cannot shine on itself, just so both

rationalists and idealists contend that the empirical and materialist paradigms are unable to account for the peculiar nature of self-consciousness. (4) Since the mind is immaterial, i.e. "simple," it intrinsically follows that there is a unity of consciousness and that I know that my thoughts are my own and not those of someone else. It is just this unique aspect of self-awareness that allows rationalists, dualists, and idealists to claim that material objects, e. g., brains, whose parts are intrinsically external to each other, by the very separation of the cells, cannot account for the essential unity that characterizes thought (Kant's transcendental unity of apperception). And, lastly (5), there is a real self, the ego is a genuine substance; and one has a "privileged access" to his or her own states of awareness; thus only I can *know* that I am in pain; you can only *infer* it (Descartes). This approach in therapy promotes the past as it strives to uncover the hidden or forgotten layers of pain and distress. Prime examples would be the therapeutic programs offered by Freudian psychoanalysis.

Once more, English-speaking writers representative of this narrative approach would include the "stream of consciousness" styles of James Joyce, Thomas Wolfe, William Faulkner, and William Gelding (especially in *Pincher Martin*).

These two models of consciousness have dominated Western philosophy and psychology since their ancient common beginnings and we would do well to recall that the two disciplines were originally one, certainly in Plato but even in Aristotle although to be sure The Philosopher deals with them in separate treatises.

However, there is yet a third picture of consciousness which appears in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it is one that is put forth by Franz Brentano, the early Husserl, and Jean-Paul Sartre. It assumes that (1) consciousness, which is not equal to *self*-consciousness nor, of course, to passive perceptions) is immaterial, either as a

phenomenological sphere of being (Husserl) or an existential "nothingness," the latter involving a correspondent awareness of nonbeing/negation/absence (Sartre). (2) It is radically free, spontaneous, without pre-existing forms or immanent structures; each of us is absolutely alone and perforce condemned to freedom; indeed, freedom is a direct consequence and implication of social unrelatedness. (3) Consciousness is intentional, beyond itself, transcendent; it is meaning-intending; it *creates* or constitutes objects, moods, and absolute values from within itself, from its own internal resources and hence independently of external or environmental factors and constraining public pressures. But these values are *absolute* for the individual alone, they are not relative or personal. (4) The ground of the unity of experience derives from posited constitutive meanings projected "beyond" one's "self"; thus meanings are transcendent to consciousness; or they are grounded in projected values, for instance, and not derived from nor rooted in a substantial, enduring self. And, finally, (5) there is no metaphysical self or theological soul underlying our states of consciousness. Accordingly, as suggested above, one of the oddities of Sartre's model of translucent consciousness is that his concept of absolute freedom depends on the hermitic isolation and loneliness of the individual without ties to God, human nature in general, or a particular society--and yet there is no Cartesian, Kantian, or Hesperian ego (as in the *Cartesian Meditations*) "behind" or "beneath" awareness. The self is not a substance, not an enduring entity. This critical consideration makes it difficult to assign moral responsibility; freedom is guaranteed but it is the freedom of no one.

This type of therapy points toward the future and subjective responsibility; indeed it is argued that the individual voluntarily chooses his "symptoms" and should assume responsibility for them. It is pointless and cowardly, Sartre insists, to blame our parents, others, or our environment for either our unhappiness or our values.

Sartre himself best exemplifies this manner of writing in literature possibly along with the work of Marguerite Duress (*The Lover*).

Implications for Therapy:

As therapists, does it make any difference as to which theory of awareness we subscribe? Does it really matter if we believe that human reality is grounded in the brain; or the compromised and injured mind's biography and history; or in an individual's sense of radical freedom? It not only makes a difference but indeed all the difference because one's assumptions about mental reality, broadly conceived, dictate the method of treatment.

Metaphysical materialism has been a vital force in Western philosophy from Democritus to Epicurus, then to Hobbes, on into the age of the French materialists, Diderot, D'Alembert, and d'Holbach, and latter on beyond them into the American behaviorists, Watson, Hull, Thorndike, Skinner, and others.

During the seventeenth century, the dual emphases on materialism and mathematics combined to fuel many of the successes and ambitions in science. Conceptually, materialism generally entails mechanism, physical and psychological determinism, ethical relativism, and, as previously intimated, rather frequently, atheism, although not always the latter. Indeed, from Descartes' *Meditation VI* (inconsistently enough, given the preceding five idealist and solipsistic *Meditations*) and on through Hobbes's *Leviathan*, a number of thinkers increasingly emphasized a brain paradigm of awareness against the doctrine of an immaterial and active mind.

In this respect, materialism commits one to believe that all mental disorders are due to chemical imbalances in the brain and that treatment is to be conducted along the lines of behavioral contracts and measurable goals. Cognitive-behavioral methods are increasingly

promoted by American psychiatrists and psychologists. Indeed, the 1990's was christened, by the American Psychiatric Association, as "the decade of the brain," as the profession committed itself, with all its scientific and technological optimism, to soon curing all "mental," i.e. brain, disorders by first analyzing, secondly dissecting, and then applying chemical interventions via medications. In fact, more recently and more frequently there is an increasing but fully predictable tendency for materialism--i.e., physiology--and medication to partnership in their therapeutic approaches. Also, not surprisingly, the focus of this form of treatment resides in the temporal present and directly observable behaviors. The past is irrelevant and the future illusionary.

Accordingly, not unexpectedly, in the early 1960's, the American Psychiatric Association assured the various states in America that the bulk of the institutionalized mental patients could be treated successfully in the community simply on the profession's promise of the efficacy of new and emerging psychiatric medications. How well that has worked, I can only leave to the reader's own judgment to evaluate.

Consider the fact that all psychiatric medications involve negative side effects and that some of them, namely, sleep, anxiety, and pain medications, are downright addictive, lead to both tolerance and withdrawal symptoms. It is also the case that the major tranquilizers are so sedating that they numb the brain, that cognitive associations are appreciably delayed, and that patients--the emphasis being on passivity--feel and think they have been drugged; they complain that they feel they are in a fog as both concentration and memory are severely impaired. Indeed, I recall trying to do a reading group with schizophrenics and starting with Joanna Greenberg's novel, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden* (which features one of my real-life heroines, Frieda Fromm-Reichman, the Dr. Freed in the novel), until I finally ended with 0.

Henry stories because the patients could not remember within minutes the few pages they had read.

America, as a culture, firmly believes in the efficacy of technology and science and is more than willing, as Dostoyevsky illustrated in the "Grand Inquisitor" passage of the *Brothers Karamazov*, to trade in freedom for happiness. Faster production of manufactured goods and faster cures naturally seem to go together. We are all in a rush to get to wherever it is we are going and processing thoughts and extensive psychotherapy are far too slow. However, if one were to pause and reflect on how long it has taken to develop a serious mental illness in virtually all cases, short of substance abuse, then it seems naïve to think that all that is required is the "right" medication, the correct tinkering with the brain's chemical imbalance. How short sighted can it be to assume that an infant, who is removed from the mother's custody at birth, and grows up in one foster home after another, can simply be repaired by the mechanism of hitting a certain combination of pills. It may work for slot machines but it seems totally at odds with what we know about human beings and more importantly, our selves.

But the most serious disadvantage of the behavioral method of treatment and psychiatric medications is grounded in the fact that they are "external" approaches to what is basically an internal problem, a crisis within consciousness, one which involves the full panoply of the dynamics of loneliness, forces which incorporate depression, hostility, narcissism, anxiety, and the subjective sense that one is unable to communicate their distress to others. These dynamic factors constitute intrinsic *a priori* but synthetic structures *within* self-consciousness.

I would argue, therefore, that the model of self-consciousness, which originally derives from Plato--and certain important passages in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, The

Philosopher inconsistently having one foot planted solidly in the empiricist camp while the other foot is just as firmly grounded in rationalism--and actually continues on into the Cartesian, Leibnizian, and Kantian theories of self-consciousness (and “descending” into the unconscious), ends in stressing the primary role of insight in therapy. Indeed, although Freud is correctly interpreted as a psychological determinist, with the traumatic event serving as the cause and the neurotic symptom functioning as the effect, nevertheless Freud clearly believes that it is by and through the self-conscious uncovering of the painful past that we are freed. In this respect, psychoanalysis shares with other ego-oriented therapies a methodology focusing on the past, whereas behaviorism concentrates on the present. But the real power of the self-conscious paradigm of therapy, which depends on exploring the immanent dynamics of awareness and the insight it produces, is also to be found in classical rationalism and idealism. Accordingly, both rationalism and idealism assume an intrinsically implicative relationship that develops between self-consciousness, then reason, and finally freedom, although to be sure rationalistic and idealistic freedom is universally structured by necessary categories whereas existential freedom is radically unstructured. Thus Freud believes that as the subject gains insight into the hitherto unconscious causes of his or her anxiety, a liberating freedom results thus enabling the self to deal rationally with the past. This is true even though Freud is--inconsistently--at the same time, a psychological determinist; nevertheless he assumes that freedom is gained through a rational insight into the underlying, unconscious causes responsible for the internalized anxiety and its resulting conflicts. Interestingly enough, the psychoanalyst, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, in the book mentioned above, tells her young charge that she is offering her the chance to *freely* choose either between health or her current retreat into psychosis. Again, this form of therapy

clearly concentrates on the past.

One of the most distinct advantages of the focus on reflexivity in the subject is that it allows for the full exploration, expression, and disclosure of the dynamics of loneliness within the labyrinths of the mortal soul. This presents a powerful alternative over behaviorist therapies and medication interventions limited as they are by their external and physical methods. Loneliness is a self-conscious phenomenon as evidenced by the fact that we can be lonely in a crowd. (We might recall that perhaps the first true novel, certainly I English, is essentially Cartesian, namely, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.) This is important because, as I have continued to stress, the drive to escape loneliness is the primary and universal motivational desire in each human being. Indeed, I have argued at length that the Cartesian cogito, the Leibnizian monad, or the Kantian transcendental unity of apperception constitute, represent, and express the correct model of man's condition. Its strength lies in its persuasive appeal that each of us, alone, intuitively grasps our internal and futile struggle to be recognized by the other; it consists in the on-going Lordship and Bondage battle so ably dialectically and phenomenologically described by Hegel and Sartre, respectively.

If we are persuaded to grant the preceding descriptions concerning the critical role of loneliness in human existence, then we are now in a position to inquire how the intentionality paradigm of Sartre, with its radical freedom of conscious activity, grounded in the exploding freedom of positing meanings, moods, and values, can be related and incorporated within the principle of self-consciousness, of reflexivity?

The answer is that the mind exhibits two mental activities: self-conscious ones and intentional ones. The former are self enclosed and the latter struggle to escape this threatening enclosed circle of awareness. Sartre himself, of course, is highly critical of Freudian

determinism, which he regards as bad faith, *mauvais foi*, self-deception, and cowardice. For, as Sartre conceives it, each human being is absolutely alone and condemned to freedom; indeed, freedom is a consequence of our absolute state of aloneness. (Freud has relatively little to say about loneliness and the explanation for that is, once more, that he began as a physiological determinist and much of the time he remains committed to the mechanistic model of consciousness despite his inconsistent therapeutic program, as we have seen above. Thus, Sartre's existential categories of solitary human existence are anguish (because of our absolute insular freedom); despair (because human life is essentially meaningless); and forlornness (because of our utter and irredeemable loneliness). Similarly, Irving Yalom, in *Existential Psychotherapy*, offers as the four critical concerns of authentic man, of genuine human existence, the confrontation each of us has with our own terrifying freedom; the meaninglessness of human existence; the inevitability of our own unique and solitary death; and the inescapable loneliness of each individual.. And it is to this last description that I have turned and for which I have sought to make a case.

The paradox of man is that he is trapped in his own hermitic self-consciousness and yet that he yearns to escape his solipsistic prison of awareness. The attempt to do so forces him to try to relate to other animate creatures beyond himself, whether God, humans, or brutes. But like a false key that merely leads to another cage, he remains condemned to loneliness. On one level, man may be indeed a “social” being, as Aristotle observes, and apart from others he is either a beast or a god but not a man, as the philosopher declares. However, his very social impulses are merely derivative and secondary to his primary feelings of loneliness and the latter drive will always remain unfulfilled. And yet man is forced to continue trying to escape, to keep attempting to burrow through a passage into the next cage.

To conclude: I simply am not convinced that materialism, behaviorism and medication have a great deal to offer beyond physical control of the person. By stimulating hyperactive children with Cylert and Ritalin and all the way through to sedating psychotics with numbing major tranquilizers, medications that essentially alter the brain but leave the mind's problems intact and unresolved, we have failed to deliver the promised cure. What needs to be recognized is that man is a paradox because he exhibits two very different powers within the mind that need to be constantly re-assessed by our reflective thoughts. The self-aware element dooms him to inescapable loneliness; its circular activities and features imprison him in a mental world of his own making. As Brand Blanshard remarked, in *The Nature of Thought*, man is like a nautilus who dwells in a house of his own making. By contrast, the intentionality dynamic enables him to at least quixotically attempt an infinite number of escape strategies that are essentially transient but often give us hope and the temporary consolation of connecting with other consciousnesses, be they divine, human, or primitive. Indeed. The very worst terror would be to be immortal but continue to exist eternally as the only self-conscious being in a lifeless universe. As Joseph Conrad expressed it, "we are lonely from the cradle to the grave and perhaps beyond." Hopefully not!

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